

Parents and families to be welcomed to Mines

Spencer Nelson
Content Manager

"It's an opportunity for parents and siblings or other family members to come to campus and see what's going on," explained Derek Morgan. In wake of the massive success of Parents Weekend held last semester, the Student Activities Office and the Parents Fund has decided to do it again. The event that brought in well over 500 parents in the fall has been rearranged into one packed day of events that is meant to bring the college experience to the families of Mines students. Parents and Family Day is coming up this Saturday, February 28. Kim Spratt, on behalf of the Parents Fund, summed up Parents and Family Day excellently, "It's a nice way to make the experience at Mines just a little more family friendly."

According to Morgan, the idea behind Parents and Family Day is simple, "We've got a lot of stuff planned. Kind of give them a sense of what a day in the life of a student is like." The day will start off with a pancake breakfast for the families. From there, the available paths are up to them. Geology Museum tours and mini-university sessions will be held throughout the day. This weekend was chosen especially due to the athletics. The families

and students are all encouraged to go to the men's baseball game in the afternoon and the men's and women's basketball games at night. A special music performance is also scheduled, featuring the Sweet Adelines, the Barbershop Quartet, the Jazz Band, and the Concert Band. The Arthur Lakes Library and the Student Recreation Center, including the pool, will be open to families for most of the day as well. Spratt stated that the the true heart of this event is to give the families "a chance to get to see Mines, parts they wouldn't see [otherwise]."

The mini-university sessions are intended to be one of the highlights of the day. The point of these sessions is to show parents what it is like to be in classes at Mines. One of the sessions is described in the schedule as "Engineering fun of building with 'junk,'" as a spin-off of a common EPICS project. Laser shows from the physics department and other similar presentations are being prepared for these sessions. All the events of Parents and Family Day are completely free. Family members are strongly encouraged to RSVP by Wednesday, February 25, by calling (303) 273-3234 or by emailing nanci.bliss@is.mines.edu.

The Appleseed Cast at the Hi-Dive

Tim Weilert
Content Manager

The Appleseed Cast, a progressive post-rock band from Lawrence, Kansas, started out over 10 years ago. During the late 90's The Appleseed Cast found themselves a part of the historic mid-west emo scene, grouped with the likes of The Get Up Kids and Sunny Day Real Estate. However, they are no longer even vaguely emo. Those familiar with the current national indie scene would not be far off to compare the group's current sound to that of Explosions In The Sky. For those who don't speak hipster, that means "heavily instrumental music with cutting edge rhythms, melodies, and harmonies."

Expectations ran high last Saturday as The Appleseed Cast came to Denver to play at the Hi-Dive. A preview of the show ran in both Westword and The Onion, and was lauded as a highly recommended concert from both newspapers. Needless to say, there was an air of anticipation as things got underway at the Hi-Dive.

Now for the concert itself. Up first was a local

group, Rabbit Is A Sphere. Their pop sound was catchy and tinged with occasional experimentation. The highlight of their set came when the group's lead guitarist began using two slides to achieve a unique sound.

Following Rabbit Is A Sphere was the 1090 Club, a pop-indie group from Billings, Montana. The best way to describe 1090 Club is intense. Their piano and guitar driven songs were complimented by violin and a good mix of vocals.

Finally it was time for what everyone was waiting for: The Appleseed Cast. By this point in the night, the venue was packed (and I'm fairly certain that it was sold out). Ripping through song after song, they played for over an hour and a half, only stopping for five minutes to take a quick break. Focusing primarily on their newer material, The Appleseed Cast played songs from their 2006 release *Peregrine* and the newly released record *Sagarmatha*. The group's intense and skillful delivery of "Here We Are (Family In The Hallway)," "The Summer Before," and "Fight Song" stood out in a strong set.



The Appleseed Cast plays for a sold-out house.

TIM WEILERT / OREDIGGER

Plus-minus, bus pass, building renovation and more discussed at ASCSM

Ian Littman
Assistant Webmaster

The first half of the ASCSM's meeting last Thursday was devoted to a discussion of the plus-minus grading system, while the second half was highlighted by discussions on the RTD bus pass, the two-year-old Capital Construction Fee, and the addition of a Budget Committee seat for the Board of Student Organizations.

Dr. Thomas McKinnon, chair of the Faculty Senate and effectively the liaison between Mines students and the faculty, led the plus-minus discussion from a faculty perspective. He first explained the rationale behind the plus-minus system - a more fine-grained, fair way of differentiating between classes of students - then reiterated that the faculty senate was well aware of the two main concerns of the Mines student body on the issue. The first concern is fairness, particularly since the system would be implemented such that some students would be under one system at one point, and the other system at a

later point in their stay at Mines. The second concern is that the plus-minus system would actually lower many students' grades. These concerns were again brought up in the meeting, albeit at a slightly different angle and with new supporting data. Dr. McKinnon made it clear that reiterating these concerns to the Faculty Senate at their Tuesday Meeting (2 PM, likely in Hill Hall 300) would probably do no further good to the students' cause.

Beyond this, both the addition of an A+ (with GPAs capped at 4.0, lest an A effectively be a 3.72 on a 4.3-point scale) and striking of the A- were suggested, though the A- idea met a lukewarm response from McKinnon, who said that the Faculty Senate would likewise be skeptical of such an amendment to the system. The result of this discussion was that all present were more informed of exactly how the plus-minus system had progressed. At the Tuesday Faculty Senate meeting, ASCSM President Kevin Duffy and At-Large Faculty Representative Rambert Nahm will have five minutes to make a student

case regarding the system, so all comments regarding the meeting should be sent through them. As a final word, Dr. McKinnon encouraged students to talk with their professors about the plus-minus system, which will technically be optional even when the system is in place; professors can simply not choose the plus-minus grades from the Banner registration system when reporting student grades.

The second half of the meeting began with ASCSM President Kevin Duffy's recap of the plus-minus system, saying "...thank you to the folks in the audience who have been active with this petition... making sure that everybody is motivated and getting charged up... [We're] really looking forward to the Tuesday meeting with the Faculty Senate."

He then announced that the ASCSM electoral process would start in a little over a week. An e-mail sent out Monday will disclose pertinent information; two weeks will be given for candidates to collect the requisite 50 signatures for running on the ballot, then one week given for campaigning. Votes will be cast

the Monday and Tuesday before E-Days.

Duffy's final announcement regarded the use of the Capital Construction fee, \$200,000 per year of which goes to classroom improvements. This is the first year that these funds will be used, and the resultant \$400,000 will go to three main places: Coolbaugh Hall 209, Brown Building 315, and Hill Hall. Coolbaugh 209 will experience complete destruction of the "acoustic cloud" of chairs, the podium (complete with non-working plumbing) and the rest of the room's furnishings, effectively leaving a bare shell on which to build. Brown Building 315 will be converted to a more CTLM-esque style. "The professors that wrote the proposal said they designed the room before the advent of the computer," Duffy remarked. Finally, Hill Hall will get "smart podiums," as can be seen in the CTLM and a few other classrooms across the campus.

Jaime Thorpe, ASCSM Treasurer, took the floor next, stating that club budget request forms would be available the following day, with

a due date of March 27.

Derek Morgan detailed the current state of the Intermodal Transportation Fee. RTD is raising rates by 14%, which would require a student vote for the Intermodal Transportation Fee to keep pace. Alternatives to the current full-service pass will be discussed in detail at the March 5 ASCSM meeting, and include a slimmer package of free fares (local rides would still be free, but other rides would increase in cost) or integration with Golden's upcoming commuter shuttle service, though the latter may not go live soon enough for appropriation of next semester's funds. Morgan added that RTD will implement a smart card system next year, allowing fine tracking of student ridership. "We could base our future fees off of our ridership," he said, "as opposed to an arbitrary survey done four years ago."

SEE ASCSM ON PAGE 3

Scientific discoveries this week

Jake Rezac, Content Manager

Camden, New Jersey: Physicists at Rutgers University have discovered a material that will improve efficiency in solar cells and computer chips. The material, made of bismuth, iron, and oxygen, is able to act as a reverse diode, which will let current flow in one direction under some conditions and the other direction in other conditions. This material also generates current when light is applied to it. They hope that these conditions will allow for computer chips that can act one way under a certain configuration and another way under a different configuration.

Los Angeles, California: Scientists have discovered a nearly complete mammoth skeleton and ecosystem while digging the foundation of a parking structure. Scientists are excited about the find, both because of the complete nature of it and because the mammoth is larger than previously discovered mammoths. The ecosystem surrounding the mammoth also includes fossil specimens of American lions, dire wolves, saber-toothed cats, and horses.

London, England: Researchers have discovered genes that protect wheat stalks from fungal diseases. The genes protect against diseases such as leaf rust, stripe rust, and powdery mildew. These fungal diseases are responsible for millions of acres of lost wheat per year. Scientists hope to help farmers protect crops without often-harmful fungicides.

Hong Kong, China: Doctors have successfully found a way to treat leukemia with combinations of arsenic and vitamin A. Of the patients treated in the study, 80 of the 85 patients went into complete remission. Although arsenic is traditionally thought of as poisonous, it has been used as a medicine since the 18th century and was approved for medical use in the United States in 2000.

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Headlines from around the world

Emily Trudell, Staff Writer

President Barack Obama's **approval rating** slid for the first time since he entered office, falling nine percent in the last week, according to a CNN poll. The president's approval rating still remains at 67 percent.

Bristol Palin, the 18-year-old daughter of Alaska Governor Sarah Palin, gave her first interview since giving birth to her son Tripp. She stated that abstinence-only **sexual education** is just "not realistic" for teenagers.

A Florida jury ruled that **to-bacco company** Phillip Morris must pay 8 million dollars to Elaine Hess, the widow of a chain smoker. Hess's case is just one of 8,000 similar cases to be brought to trial in the state.

Scientists announced the discovery of the **Danton**, a French battleship that has been underwater since it was sunk by a German torpedo in World War I. Nearly 300 soldiers died when the ship sank.

Baseball star **Alex Rodriguez** stated in a press conference that he was first introduced to performance enhancing drugs in 2001, and admitted to taking two injections a month between 2001 and 2003 when he was playing for the Texas Rangers.

A group of scientists determined that **Osama bin Laden** is most likely hiding within a 20 mile radius of Tora Bora, on the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The scientists used technology currently used for finding fugitives and endangered species.

The recently discovered **green comet**, Lulin, passed near Earth.

Lulin, discovered two years ago by a Chinese teenager, is composed mainly of gasses, and travels in the opposite direction around the sun of most of the other planets and comets in the solar system.

Two Italian nuns that were kidnapped in Kenya and held captive in **Somalia** back in November were freed. The nuns had been in the area doing work with hunger and health programs.

Patients treated with the first ever **lung cancer vaccines** are living longer, according to the Dr. Gisela Gonzalez, the Cuban

scientist who invented the vaccine. The Cuban government approved the use of the drug last year, after tests on over 700 patients proved promising.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average closed at a **six year low**, falling 1.3 percent below where it was in 2002. The Dow has lost 48 percent of its value since the recession, banking crisis, and real estate market collapse.

A train station in Warrington, England has banned kissing from most of the areas of their station,

creating a **designated kissing area**, where couples may kiss.

Italy rushed an emergency rape decree that mandates that rapists convicted of the rape of a minor, or rapes wherein the victim dies, are sentenced to **life in prison**. The law was rushed into action after three high-profile rape cases occurred in the country last week.

At least **74 mine workers** were killed early Sunday morning in a coal mine explosion in northern **China**. 3200 miners died in China in 2008, according to state media.



ASCSM addresses issues

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Next were class announcements; both the freshman and sophomore class presidents reported that their constituencies didn't care very much about the current form of the plus-minus grading system, as it won't affect them. Lisa Truong, Sophomore Class President, also mentioned Sophomore Saturdays, an upcoming breakfast-for-dinner event, complete with Saturday morning cartoon viewing.

After a few other minor announcements, Kevin Duffy made the motion to install Vice President Anant Pradhan, Representative to Board of Trustees Amy Dubetz, Graduate Treasurer Aaron Sumner, Senior Class Treasurer Brandon Killinger, and himself as ASCSM Election committee members. The purpose of the election committee is to answer questions, advertise, and resolve disputes (if any) relating to the upcoming ASCSM elections. The choice of graduating students was made so all committee members "do not have a vested interest in ASCSM" in the future. The motion carried with only one in opposition.

The final motion of the meeting was to add a Board of Student Organizations (BSO) representative to the ASCSM Budget Committee,

citing the BSO's intimate knowledge of the organizations they represented, and thus their better ability to determine appropriate funding for their constituency. "Our sole purpose is to present and support the organizations on-campus that would not otherwise be directly represented by other bodies at CSM... it's our hope that our involvement with the budget committee would result in direct representation of organizations, and allow for better question resolution during committee meetings, especially as we have unique insight into the functions of organizations at CSM," Karly Adams, BSO treasurer, stated. The motion failed 4-12-5, however, as the BSO currently has four representatives on ASCSM, and this arrangement is already considered a compromise. ASCSM may accept or reject the budget, and thus it was determined that the BSO had enough power as it stood, though the idea of a non-voting seat on the Budget Committee is not out of the question.

This motion concluded the main body of the ASCSM meeting. Kevin Duffy stated that he was looking forward to seeing everyone at the Faculty Senate meeting on Tuesday at 2 PM in Hill Hall 300, and adjourned the meeting.

Fighting global warming with lasers

Benjamin M. Weilert
Staff Writer

It sounds like something straight out of science fiction. A satellite orbiting the earth fires a laser towards the surface and receives back information about the atmosphere. However, according to Carl Weimer from Ball Aerospace, this has been a reality for almost three years.

Speaking at the Heiland Lecture last Thursday, Weimer clarified the specifics of the project named CALIPSO, which is an acronym for, "Cloud and Aerosol Lidar and Infrared Pathfinder Satellite Observations." Lidar is a laser system, but is different from typical lasers, which are usually used for altitude measurements. Lidar also gives information about the medium it is traveling through. "Their goal is to measure not just how long it takes to go out and back, but also give you some idea of what's between you and some background scene," Weimer said of lidar systems.

Weimer continued his lecture with some highlights of remote sensing laser systems in space. "People usually ask, 'Have lasers been in space for very long?' and they have, dating back to the Apollo days." Most lasers used for atmospheric observation have been shot from the ground or from airplanes, which could be maintained for greater data accuracy.

However, this is not the case for the lidar on CALIPSO. "One of the big challenges for space is getting reliable laser systems," Weimer explained. Even with a laser that is supposed to be eye-safe at the ground and to aircraft, there have been a few sightings of the CALIPSO laser. One such sighting was reported as a UFO when a man suddenly experienced a green flash late at night.

The CALIPSO mission was launched in 2006 and is nearing the end of its term of duty. Weimer clarified, "It's a three year mission... NASA will keep it on longer. As long as the satellite is healthy, they'll keep it up and working." One of the reasons that the satellite was slated for a three-year mission was because it was considered a pathfinder mission. "This is not a technology mission; it is a science mission using the latest technology. But since it's never flown for this application before, it is considered a pathfinder."

In designing the CALIPSO system, many constraints were brought into play. "The whole thing obviously has to sit inside a rocket ferry. We're on a medium sized rocket, the Delta 2." As a result of the payload issue, most of the satellite is made of a graphite structure, which is light

and durable. There is also no need for cooling tubes for the electronics, since the heat transfers out into the icy blackness of space. Still, many issues persist. "You also have to operate in a space environment," Weimer said of the various hazards, which include radiation and micrometeoroids.

The main reason why this mission was launched was to help address important questions in climate change and air quality. Specifically, it looks into aerosols in the atmosphere, "This is where CALIPSO comes into play." These aerosols vary from moisture and dust to pollution and smoke from fires or volcanoes. Weimer said, "We want to know the aerosols in clouds that can do different things." These different things are the absorption or reflection of light from the sun, thus affecting climate change.

With almost three years worth of data, CALIPSO has produced some interesting results. Luckily, the data that has been received is more accurate than similar data taken with lidar from airplanes.

"You're trying to collect data when you're up 705 km away from the target that you're looking at, so it's very low signal to noise ratios." Some conclusions drawn from the data collected include information about hurricane creation, ocean wind speed and the destruction of the ozone layer in Antarctica. More information on the CALIPSO program can be found at <http://calipsooutreach.hamptonu.edu/>

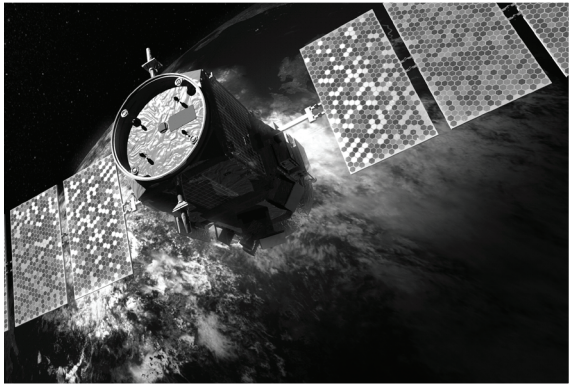


PHOTO COURTESY WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

An artist's rendition of the CALIPSO satellite

Faster erosion through porosity

David Underwood
Staff Writer

Alexis Navarre-Sitchler, a Mines Graduate, studies weathering rates in rocks. Her presentation in the Van Tuyl Lecture on Thursday focused on porosity and its effects on weathering, especially in basalts. Fluids, particularly water, are paramount in the weathering process.

"Interactions between fluids and minerals change rock properties and produce sediment and dissolved minerals," explained Sitchler. "Weathering is the first process in soil formation." As rocks are weathered, they are both chemically and physically altered. As time progresses, they produce what is called a soil profile, which varies from the top, being complete soil and zero parent rock, to some mixture of the two, to solid rock, called bedrock. Sitchler demonstrated this with a graph that placed depth verses percentage of parent rock. One portion of the graph contains 100% parent rock, another contains 0%. The area in between is called the "reaction

front," the area where weathering is actively taking place.

According to Sitchler, there has always been a "large discrepancy between weathering rates found in a lab and those observed in the field. There is a lot of work that goes on to try and understand the discrepancy between what goes on in the lab and in the field." For her research, Sitchler hoped to model the rates of weathering for large soil profiles originating from basaltic rock. This was accomplished by using individual basaltic rocks that had developed something called a "weathering rind." This weathering rind was a portion of the outside of the rock, which had been chemically weathered into other rocks. If she could accurately model the rate of weathering in these individual rocks, the same model could be applied to larger soil profiles. Key bits of information were the rock's porosity along the interface between the weathered and unaltered rock. This interface, just as in the larger soil profile, is called the reaction front. Each of these reaction fronts,

on both the large and small scales, behaves similarly. Using various methods such as X-ray diffraction, micro-computed tomography, and neutron scattering, data was collected about the porosity and rate of decay along the reaction front. Her first attempts using X-ray diffraction showed a glimpse into the porosity of the rock, but the model produced from this data "clearly didn't work." The next step was to increase the resolution using neutron scanning, which allows much smaller empty spaces to be seen.

Using this new data, a few other approaches, and a bit of a trial and error, Sitchler was able to create a model that accurately reflected her data. It appeared to successfully model the rate of weathering for a terrace she was studying in Costa Rica given age data collected by other methods. She now hopes that she will be able to further prove her model once more data is collected. Sitchler also has hopes that her research will be applicable to other useful areas such as fracture propagation in rocks.

Health Center promotes wellness

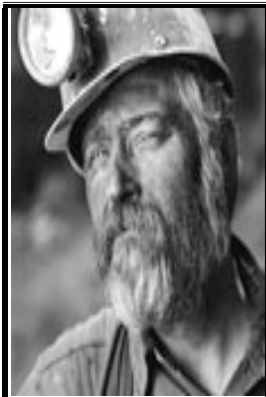
Be sure and partake in the festivities at **CSM's 19th Annual Wellness Day!**

Each year, a variety of local health and wellness experts gather in the Ballrooms of the Student Center to share their wares with the CSM campus community. This event is a wonderful opportunity to sample new products, get a massage, participate in health screenings and safety demonstrations, and just have a great time! Where else can you taste organic foods, get some quick health checks, dabble in acupuncture, try some yoga, and meet a naturopath all in one place? Did I mention the **FREE STUFF?**

We continue to promote the **5 Dimensions of Wellness: Physical, Emotional, Social, Intellectual, and Spiritual** through this event. We have invited vendors who represent all of these dimensions with the goal of broadening our views of Wellness. Everything from traditional and alternative medicine, safety and prevention, outdoor recreation and travel, healthy eating and nutrition will be represented. Students and staff can enter drawings for great prizes after attending the event.

Wellness Day occurs Friday, February 27 from 10:30 AM to 1:30 PM in the Student Center Ballrooms.

We'll see you there!



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Cooking Corner

Game Review: Saint's Row 2

Puppy Chow

Lily Giddings
Managing Editor

Ingredients:
1/2 cup Peanut Butter
1/4 cup Butter
1 cup Chocolate Chips
1/2 tsp. Vanilla
9 cups Chex cereal
1-1/2 cups Powdered Sugar

Utensils:
Microwave-safe bowl
Large bowl
Large Ziploc bag
Mixing spoon

Instructions:
Combine peanut butter, butter, and

chocolate chips in microwave-safe bowl. Microwave until melted. Remove bowl from microwave, add vanilla, and stir ingredients until well mixed. Put chex in large bowl, pour melted ingredients over and stir until cereal is coated. Pour coated cereal into Ziploc bag, and add powdered sugar. Seal bag and shake vigorously. Enjoy! Puppy chow can be stored in the Ziploc bags (if there is any left).



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Zachary Boerner
Copy Editor



The sequel to the "Grand Theft Auto knockoff" Saints Row, Saints Row 2 takes everything that you loved about Saints Row and Grand Theft Auto 4 and turns it up a notch. To bring the player up to speed, there's a short cutscene at the beginning of the game where two guards are walking while talking about a prisoner that's just woken up after a few years in a coma. Fans of the series will note that this is the protagonist from the original Saints Row, who ran the 3rd Street Saints and was, at the end of the game, caught in an explosion that put him into the coma he (or she) is in. After the brief introduction, the game lets you customize your character. Unlike Grand Theft Auto's Niko Bellic, who's appearance you cannot change throughout the game, Saints Row 2 tries to give the player as many options as it possibly can, allowing you to edit almost any aspect of the appearance. There are people online who've made some pretty wacky characters, and using the customization option, you could conceivably create any person, living or dead. In addition to basic player customization, there are options to choose how you compliment or insult people, along with what fighting style you will use in the game and what voice you have. An improvement over the previous game is that you can create a female character, with voices to match. The voices in the game are wonderful, and the player can choose from three different male voices and another three female. The voices are varied enough to suit your playstyle, and despite the fact that they all say the same exact lines, they all have different inflections, making each playthrough unique. After escaping the prison with help from a guy who's brother used to be in the Saints, the protagonist arrives back in Stilwa-

Saints Row 2 tries to give the player as many options as it possibly can, allowing you to edit almost any aspect of the appearance.

ter to find that the city no longer recognizes him, Ultor (A clothing company) has practically redesigned the city, and three new gangs have taken control of what used to be the Saints' territory. The gangs are also interesting in that none of them seem stereotypical. There's the Sons of Samedi, who follow the Vodoun god of death, the Brotherhood, who can be summed up as one character put it, "They like trucks and tattoos," and the Ronin, a Japanese gang that listens to pop music and frequently disappoints the leader's father. All of the gangs have unique colors, taunts, territories, and vehicles, and the game never feels like you're fighting the same people when you enter a different gang's territory. After busting out the protagonist's second, Johnny Gat, the protagonist then proceeds to start taking back his or her city. Most of the missions are different and varied enough that you never feel they are repetitive, even if you fail and have to do the mission again. Since all the various gangs are different, the missions are different, too, matching the style of the gang that you are up against. However, before you can perform any mission, you have to gain enough "respect" to do so. Respect is gained by performing various side quests and completing tricks or dangerous maneuvers. The side missions are just as entertaining, if not more so, than the main quests. A personal favorite was Insurance Fraud, where the character purposefully falls down in front of vehicles to damage him- or herself until they raise enough money. The mission also has a nifty feature called adrenaline mode, whereby the character flies farther, is lighter, and gains way more cash. It is quite amusing to watch the protagonist (mine in a suit) go flying hundreds of feet in the air to get hit by another truck and get launched again. Other missions include one where a septic truck is driven

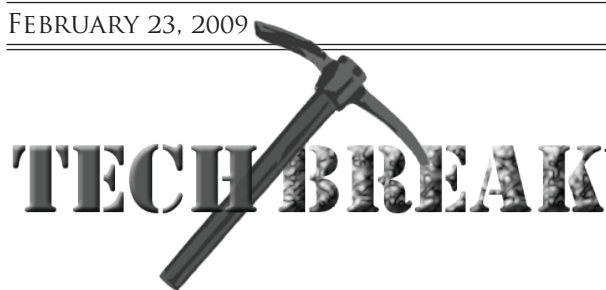
around and you are given control of a turret on it. Your purpose is to spray buildings with the solid waste from the truck to lower property values so the driver's cousin can sell property more easily. Moving on, the combat system is well-balanced except for a few occasional things. Enemies can never seem to hit the character until they suddenly do, at which point every bullet they fire seems to hit the character. While this can be easily solved by ducking for cover, it is still annoying in that if you aren't careful, you'll kill yourself easily by not paying attention to what's shooting you. Hand-to-hand combat and object-based combat are decent, but considering that most enemies in the game have weapons, the player will quickly abandon these forms of combat for more projectile-based ones. Performance-wise, well... The game will vary in performance depending on what system you play it on. On the PS3, the game runs smoothly, looks great, and the sound is crystal-clear. On PC, however, Volition games appears to have rushed development, and the game clearly shows it. The game stutters while driving quickly and has the odd quirk that it will freeze for about two seconds while it seemingly loads more information into RAM. Some would argue that this is the indication that whoever is running the game has a slow PC, but I just built mine and it is in no way slow. A patch was released that had "general performance improvements of up to 20%," but the problem hasn't been entirely fixed yet, necessitating another patch. On the PC, the voices also seem to have a weird grainy quality to them that wasn't there on the PS3, but only voices that aren't in cutscenes – those are fine. All together, the game is definitely better than Grand Theft Auto 4, mainly due to the fact that Saints Row 2 doesn't try to take itself as seriously as GTA. SR2 knows that it is over the top and relishes in that fact, whereas GTA is over the top but tries to hide it. If you have a PC that can run it or a Playstation 3, I would highly recommend picking up this game if you're a fan of open-ended worlds.

The game will vary in performance depending on what system you play it on.



ZACH BOERNER / OREDIGGER

Time off. Playable character shares a beer with his second and the second's girlfriend.



Obama, Broadband and the ARRA

Ian Littman, Tech Break Columnist

Last Tuesday, President Barack Obama signed, at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, a four-hundred-plus-page document that will, over the next several years, disburse nearly \$800 billion in what could be called New Deal #2. In case you're wondering, this is still the Tech Break column. However, this week let's take a look at the ARRA. The reason? A few billion dollars are being thrown toward broadband.

Between the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (which I'll refer to as the BTOP) and the Distance Learning, Telemedicine, and Broadband Program (which I'll call the DLTBP), \$7.2 billion will be spent to, hopefully, get this nation up to speed; the US is currently fifteenth in terms of broadband penetration, and similarly lackluster in the speed and price departments compared with the rest of the world. If you want to follow along and sort out the legalese for yourself, I've put the ARRA on my own high-speed server; get it at <http://govtfiles.simplecdn.net/arra.pdf>. Otherwise, I can cut through the six or so pages of legal speak here.

First off, the money. \$2.5 billion to the Department of Agriculture for their broadband program, an extension of the 1936 Rural Electrification

Act. In this context, the association makes sense; broadband is to 2009 and beyond as electricity was to 1936 and forward. Several providers have already taken advantage of the Department of Agriculture's program, and this ARRA provision merely fuels the flame; several wireless and powerline broadband operators are funded in a major way via this system, and many more will likely follow.

The provisions of the DLTBP are relatively simple. To get funding, you have to serve the underserved, preferably with as much choice as possible to the customer, while remaining a financially sustainable institution, at least in part. 75% or more of a provider's coverage area has to be in places where lack of decent broadband is hampering rural development, and the provider with the most outreach to such areas will get the most funding. Speaking of funding, organizations can't receive handouts from both the BTOP and this bill. One last provision. Providers who allow multiple service providers to use their network (like, for example, Qwest does with their DSL service) get preferential treatment when it comes to doling out cash, which is as it should be. If someone wants to pay \$20 more per month for a low-latency gaming-centric network, and another person is just fine with a

cheaper, lower-quality network, they should both be able to get service over the same network; no use building out two expensive rural networks when one will do the job.

As to the BTOP, there's \$4.7 billion to spend. \$4.35 billion goes to broadband and other related enterprises, \$350 million goes to mapping broadband penetration. If you're thinking this is a big number for an apparently small task, you're right, but cable and telephone companies have been very hesitant to give up broadband availability information except piecemeal to potential customers. The reason: fear that their operation would be marked as a sad sham by government officials, who would then realize that many areas of the US are poorly served, or not served at all, by the incumbent cable-telephone duopoly.

As to the rest of the money, \$10 million overall goes to oversight of funds disbursement and no more than 3%, or \$141 million, goes to administrative overhead. Of the \$4.35 billion reserved for broadband, \$200 million (or maybe more) goes to augmenting computer center capacity at places like libraries and community colleges, and \$250 million goes to programs for encouraging adoption of sustainable broadband service, whatever that means. Sounds like an

awareness program to me, but one can't be sure...

The balance of the money is discussed near the end of the ARRA. No hard figures on what's technically "broadband;" lobbyists successfully stripped the numerical values from the act for now. However, in a year or so a more substantive (versus four highly repetitive pages of legalese) national broadband plan will be brought to bear. Currently, the goals are general, improving the welfare of the nation in every way imaginable through more broadband everywhere. More specifically, the plan is to outfit educational (schools, colleges, libraries), medical, community and public safety organizations with better, faster, more available broadband service. Additionally, if deploying broadband creates jobs, that's covered in this part of the Act. "Low-income, unemployed, aged and otherwise vulnerable populations" are also priorities for fast, affordable, available broadband. With these goals in mind, priority one is getting service to unserved areas (which I'm assuming are those without DSL-speed access available to them... and satellite doesn't count here). Next in line is improvement of services already in place.

Oversight? Absolutely; award recipients send in progress reports every 90 days, have to justify the money they're asking for, must come up with 20% of their funding through other, non-governmental sources (except

in special cases) and must complete the work they promised by two years after they get funding, or else risk that money going to someone else. There's even a provision that providers shouldn't be allowed to get filthy rich off of a combination of this, and other, government programs. Ideally, the system is a nice one, though loopholes are sure to abound, with much of the terms in this part of the Act left up to the administrator's discretion. One more thing. Everyone can play (as it should be)... states, municipalities, and for-profit companies can all get handouts under this program. Speaking of states, a provision in the Act states that, ideally, at least one award will be given per state. Looks like Rhode Island will be going all-fiber in no time flat.

In sum, the broadband portions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which can be found on pages 4-5, 14, and 398-402 of the Act PDF, could be better, but they're a start. Previously, hard definitions (and good ones) were set for "broadband" as well as "advanced broadband," "basic broadband" and "advanced wireless broadband." Those provisions are gone for now, though they will hopefully be reintroduced into the national broadband plan within the next year. In the meanwhile, one can only hope that the several billion dollars that make up this portion of Obama's first stimulus package won't be wasted.

Beer Review

Saison Dupont



Akira Rattenbury
Staff Writer

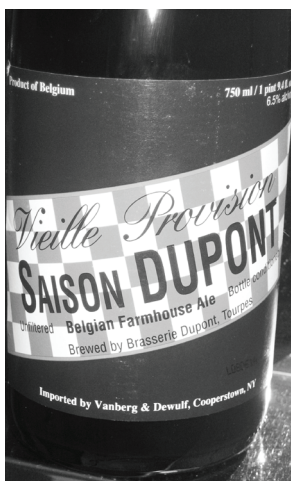
If I was a farmer instead of an engineer, I would move to Belgium for the beer. The Belgian-brewed Saison Dupont is a Farmhouse ale and is unsurprisingly a very good beer made in farm country.

Saison, a fancy French word for "season," is a seasonal beer style originally brewed in the French-speaking Wallonia region of Belgium. This fruity, well-carbonated, sweet, yet refreshingly dry style, was a farmhouse staple to please the palates of farm workers busy with the fall harvest. Allotted up to 5 liters a day, one can imagine the harvest season took a bit longer in Belgium than elsewhere.

This strong yet crisp style needed to survive storage, be portable because potable water apparently wasn't, but not so strong as to inebriate workers. Fortunately, the strong carbonation usually ensured only a few glasses could be enjoyed at a time.

The Saison Dupont from the Brasserie Dupont company boasts the most copied fermentation technique and yeast strain of the entire saison style. Fermented about 10-20°F above other saisons and ales, the Brasserie Dupont is the sought after benchmark of refined saison brewing. Men's Journal went so far as to claim the Saison Dupont the best beer in the world in 2005.

The superlative is well earned.



AKIRA RATTENBURY / OREDIGGER

The intriguing green 750 mL bottle seemed fit for a summer picnic. Like any good unfiltered yeast-rich ale, the Saison Dupont is bottle conditioned to continue the fermentation process after bottling. One must literally "pop the bottle" like champagne because the continued fermentation allows the natural yeast action to produce CO₂, thus pressurizing the bottle.

Pouring was a bit hazardous as an impressive 3-inch head formed immediately in my small goblet. The bottle even continued to foam for about 5 minutes until I drank enough to give the carbonation room in the bottle. The color was a light honey yellow with a hint of amber. The smell was somewhat pungent and sour, but had a sweet bread quality attributed to the heavy amounts of yeast involved.

The taste was superb and invigorating. The perfect blend of sweet, sour, heavy, light, rich, and crisp all happened in my mouth at once. The notes of cloves were subdued and added a refreshing spice to the earthy blend. The "banana nut bread" flavor, typical of white beers, played a critical role, and it is understandable why so many breweries have tried to copy this beer.

Mouthfeel is slippery, guided by the heavy carbonation's firm hand. You do not taste the alcohol, despite the 6.5%ABV. Do not fret when you see sediment at the bottom of your glass, just drink it down and enjoy this delicious beer.

Must See Movies

Silent films

Benjamin M. Weilert, Staff Writer

In today's modern film world, many things are communicated through the use of sound. This includes such things as dialogue and sound effects. However, at the dawn of cinema, there were no such luxuries. As a result, many things needed to be shown on the screen and heard through the musical score. If any dialogue happened, it needed to be shown as text on the screen, because there were no microphones to record the dialogue. This is perhaps why these silent films relied a lot on large physical actions to convey emotions, because too many title frames would get far too boring. This week's Must See Movies examine the adage that "Silence is golden," with these films from the golden age of film:

1. The Gold Rush (1925)

Charlie Chaplin has been hailed as the master of silent film comedy, and *The Gold Rush* is no exception to this rule. In it, Chaplin, who also directs, plays the Little Tramp, who has decided to go up to Alaska to take advantage of the Gold Rush going on there. With challenges like a misbehaving house, loneliness, and hungry roommates, the Tramp endures it all for a chance at a little wealth and fortune. Without saying a word, Chaplin could express absolutely any emotion on the screen. It is no wonder that his silent films have held up so well over time. *The Gold Rush* was placed on the American Film

Institute's (AFI) top 100 list at #58, along with two other Chaplin films, *City Lights* (#11) and *Modern Times* (#78).

2. The General (1927)

Another staple of the silent film comedy genre is the work of Buster Keaton. However, ironically enough, *The General* plays more as an action film than a comedy. Again, the director of the film (Keaton) is also the lead role, Johnny Gray. The setting for this film is around the time of the American Civil War. As war breaks out, Johnny enlists to fight as a soldier for the Confederacy, but is reassigned to the position of engineer because of his love for trains. However, his other love, Anna-

which produced a lot of action in *The General*. AFI recently put *The General* on its top 100 list at #18.

3. Sunrise: A Tale of Two Humans (1927)

In a time before the Best Picture Oscar was given out, *Sunrise* received the award for Best Picture with the caveat of "Unique and Artistic Production." Indeed, *Sunrise* deserves every bit of that distinction. The cinematography and special effects for this film made it feel much further beyond its time. The plot of *Sunrise* is as basic and as timeless as they come. A man is being tempted by a local seductress, who convinces him that he needs to get rid of his wife. While out on a boating trip, the man comes close to killing his wife, but cannot go through with it, and finishes the trip to the other side, where a carnival awaits. Through some amusing events, including the chasing of a drunken pig, the couple falls back in love with each other. However, on the stormy return to their town, the boat capsizes, leading to a very touching ending. By far one of the best dramatic silent films, AFI has placed *Sunrise: A Tale of Two Humans* at #82 on its top 100 list.

For Homework – See *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919)



LILY GIDDINGS / OREDIGGER

belle thinks that he was reassigned due to cowardice. When the Union takes control of his train, with Annabelle on board, Johnny gets a chance to rescue her (and his beloved train). Keaton's skill in silent films comes with his use of slapstick comedy,

Geek of the Week

...Benjamin Conley, Sophomore: Mechanical Engineering

Kristin Chuchwa
Staff Writer

What brought you to Mines?

I came here to study mechanical engineering. I was pretty much raised to be an engineer, just like my father before me.

Are there many engineers in your family?

My father has a degree in aerospace engineering from the Naval Academy.

Are you a Navy Brat?

Not quite. My dad was in the reserves most of the time although he was deployed for military exercises occasionally.

Have you had any interesting summer jobs?

Yes, I have mostly done tech support and telemarketing. I worked for the Colorado Historical Society in tech support for a couple of summers. I also know now that I hate telemarketing. I pity the



KRISTIN CHUCHWA / OREDIGGER

fools who have to do it for a job.

Any interesting experiences?

I've found most problems are between the monitor and the operator.

Favorite class at mines?

EGGN 371. Thermodynamics one (Mech E. version). I won't say it makes sense, but it kind of makes the world make sense. It's one of the reasons I want to study mechanical engineering.

What do you want to do with your degree?

Probably work at an aerospace company or a small or medium size engineering firm. I really like my Mech. E degree because it can be used pretty much anywhere.

If you could change one thing about mines

NO Quant Lab.

Favorite Movie or book

Apocalypse Now Redux and *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad. I also like *Rebecca* by Daphne Du Maurier.

What do you do when you're not studying?

I try to write short stories.

What's your favorite genre?

Classic Horror, but definitely not slasher. More like Poe and Lovecraft.

What did you like to do growing up?

I really like Legos and erector sets. My Dad taught me to play D and D (first edition). So I guess it's kind of in the family.

Favorite place to eat out?

I really like the Windy Saddle Café in Golden. It kind of makes me wonder if I have a crazy liberal arts evil twin out there...

Favorite color?

Khaki, but all Earth tones in general work. Incidentally, it hides the coffee stains.

Favorite thing about Golden?

It doesn't feel like a suburb and has some character about it, especially down town.

Favorite band?

I really like REM, particularly the song "It's the End of the World as We Know it" and "The One I Love."

If you could be an animal what kind would you be?

I would be a coyote, because they are always wandering about.

If you could add a class, what would it be?

Some Epics (literary) class dealing with Milton Virgil. Not a design class. Nooooo....

Do you have any special talents?

I can read Latin. I read *The Aeneid* in Latin and took it for four years in high school.

Do you have any pets?

I have four cats at home. My family used to foster animals for a shelter so I'm kind of sick of sick kittens. I really like small animals that don't pounce on me or try to use me as a chew toy.

Would you rather take tests or be sick?

It depends on what the disease is, how sick is sick?

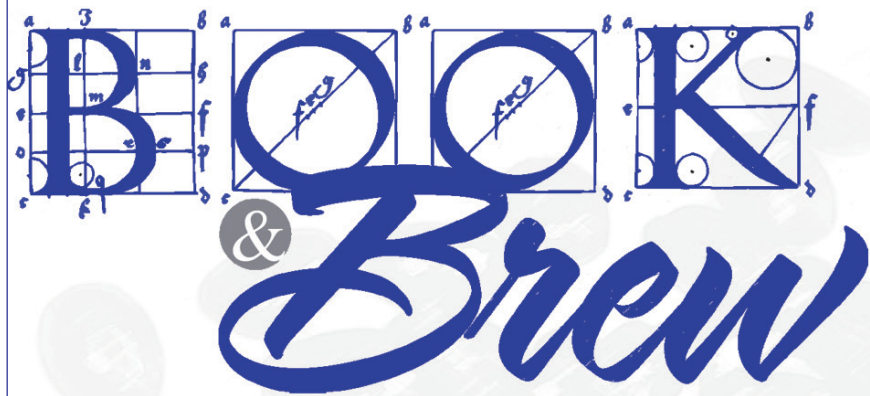
Art of Science

ERIK LORD / OREDIGGER



"When you are courting a nice girl, an hour seems like a second. When you sit on a red-hot cinder, a second seems like an hour. That's relativity."

~Albert Einstein



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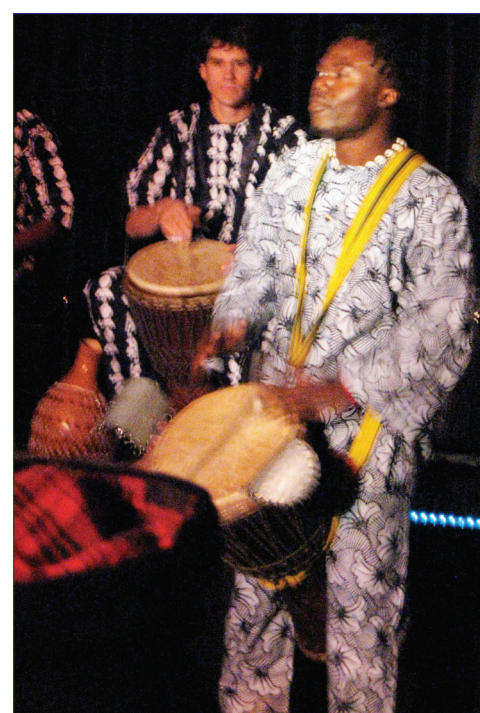


CELEBRATION AND REFLECTION FOR NSBE



Tim Weilert
Content Manager

The National Society of Black Engineers celebrated Black History Month last Friday with a celebration. The event featured authentic home cooked African cuisine and a show. Audience participation was encouraged during traditional drum and dance routines, while a more serious tone was taken during certain parts of the evening. Several poems, songs, and speeches helped the audience reflect on the past oppression and future hope of an entire people.



Campus Benefactor: George Randall

Sarah Nelson
Staff Writer

Wrought with concise, simplistic design, the Traditionals provide housing to a multitude of students, brought together from a diverse range of backgrounds by the common interest of pursuing an education here at the Colorado School of Mines (CSM). Students' minds flourish with the opportunities provided by the array of knowledge that pours forth from every crevice of campus, aspiring into the inventive minds that will apply their vast degrees around the world. And after a full day of delving into the inner workings of the universe, they oft retreat to the sanctuary of their respective dorms; a home away from home. But from whence arose these buildings, humble in their essential nature? Their story, as well as the story of the very foundation of CSM itself, can be traced to the selfless contributions of one dedicated man - his name etched humbly into

one of these dorms. Modest in nature, placed near the back entrance of the Student center, sits Randall Hall, home to approximately 90 students. It is simple, with its structure indicative of its function - to provide students a place in which to live. With a stature of fortitude, it is a place of comfort and rest while simultaneously acting as a safe haven for studying. Much in the reflection of its namesake, it is the facilitator of knowledge that stands quietly in the backdrop with content disposition. The Right Reverend George Maxwell Randall of Massachusetts was appointed Bishop to the Missionary Jurisdiction of Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico in 1865. The discovery of gold a few years earlier, in 1859, brought an influx of farmers, prospectors, and settlers to what was then the territory of Colorado. The newly consecrated Bishop Randall traveled to Colorado amidst this incursion of settlers, carried by more than the allure of gold

and open land. Upon his arrival in Colorado, Golden was already a budding mining community. Bishop Randall saw the keen need for both a church and an educational facility in the developing city, and immediately started implementing both. Initiating the building of a church was first. Today, Golden's Calvary Church is the oldest Episcopal Church in Colorado that is still used for weekly services, with Bishop Randall having laid the cornerstone nearly a century and a half ago on September 23, 1867. His grand endeavors did not stop there. Along with a vision of a place for individuals to worship, the Bishop believed in the necessity of instilling a place for individuals to learn. And so sprang CSM, the first college in Colorado. Originally, CSM was part of a trinity of schools consisting of the School of Mines, Jarvis Hall, and Mathews Hall with the latter two being seminary and theology schools. They opened on October 19 of 1869. The

initial excitement of the townspeople was documented in the August 15, 1867 edition of the Rocky Mountain News. "Bishop Randall has at last completed his arrangements for the erection of a fine brick building to be devoted to the purposes of education... Bishop Randall is entitled to the best thanks of the public for his noble efforts in the cause of education." The college was originally constructed under the auspices of the Episcopal Church and in 1874 it became a territorial institution. Along with the attainment of statehood for Colorado in 1876, came Mines's final transition into a state institution. The seminary and theology buildings burned down but the School of Mines flourished, growing into what we recognize as today. In order to accommodate this growth, Randall Hall was established in 1957, named after the man who planted the seed of CSM. And so the simple building that goes unnoticed by passersby

each day holds a rich history that unravels the very story of the Colorado School of Mines. These words, eloquent in their brevity, were spoken by the Bishop at the completion of the building of the college, "The laying of the cornerstone of the first collegiate building in Colorado marks an epoch in the history of the Territory. I trust that this event will be but the beginning of an educational progress, which will render this whole land more distinguished for its wealth of good learning, than for its mines of precious metals." http://inside.mines.edu/Fac_staff/senate/dist_lecture/weimer_text.pdf http://www.alumnifriends.mines.edu/fun_stuff/history_1962/default.html <http://www.stphilipintheield.org> http://inside.mines.edu/All_about/history/briefhistory.html



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Ask Andrew

Andrew Aschenbrenner
Staff Writer

Dear Andrew,

I was in a relationship with a person for two years. It was emotionally draining, to say the least. We lived together for most of that time and spent all of our free time together. We argued constantly over many issues, but at the end of the day, we were still best friends. I broke it off about a month ago and even though I have moved out of his place, there are still some loose ends. My ex still thinks we are together, but I have made it clear that I need to be alone. I care for him and my love for him has evolved into more of a platonic friendship, but he still thinks of me and loves me as a girlfriend. I feel like I have been clear about my intentions, but he still doesn't get it. I have tried to let him down easy, but I am afraid that I may have to be harsher and I **really** don't want to be. I respect him and love him, but I know that we aren't right for one another.

What can I do to show that I am over the romantic relationship without compromising the friendship?

Signed,
Caring for Clueless

Dear Caring,

You have to risk something to gain something. You may lose it, but do you really want a friend who thinks he is dating you? If you put your friendship on the line now, you could end up strengthening it.

If you have confidence that everything short of being harsh has been tried to help him get the message, it is time to take it up a notch. When someone does not pick up on a subtle message, it usually means that there is an unwillingness to accept the situation as it is or that your signals have not been received. Either way, it is time to get more to the point.

While your relationship sounds healthy, your communication does not. If he still thinks of you as a girlfriend, it's time to break off completely for some amount of time.

You may believe that you have been clear, but resist the urge to assume anything. State your case in plain and forceful terms. If you feel the need to say that being friends is still possible, do so, but be careful to leave a sign on the door to friendship rather than leave it open. If he wants to be just friends, he will come around after some time disconnected from you. You can respect and love someone all you want, but if they fail to respect or love you, there is nothing you can do to fix that.

Clean up your "loose ends" as quickly as possible. You must either completely redefine or restart the relationship as friends in order to avoid the awkwardness and residual feeling that you are experiencing now.

You mentioned that you are no longer living with him, but if you are still living in the area, it may be harder to not see or talk to him for a while. Nevertheless, a complete break appears to be necessary, at least for a time. Otherwise, the issue will continue to persist.

Devon Energy and Hiring

Zachary Boerner
Copy Editor

Devon Energy, who was at Mines at Career Day, is one of the few companies still hiring despite the prevailing economic conditions. Considering that Mines produces many of the positions they are hiring, this is a good thing for everyone involved.

Devon Energy, a production and exploration company, focuses on the upstream side of the oil and gas business. Their portfolio is about "60-40 and 50-50 between natural gas and oil," according to Alesha Leemaster, Senior Communications Specialist in Devon's Corporate Communications Group.

"We [focus] on what makes

sense for the portfolio in terms of finding land," Leemaster said. This means that their portfolio varies greatly depending on "what formation we're targeting."

Because they keep expanding their business, Devon continues hiring Mines graduates and interns. For 2009, Devon is hiring 155 interns in the US and 42 in Canada. "It's the largest in Devon's history," says Elizabeth Costello, Manager of HR Operations over Campus Recruiting in the US. In addition to hiring these interns, they are still hiring graduates. They've hired "72 new hires in the US for 2009, another dozen [in] Canada." This does not include hires already in industry. The reason that they keep hiring is that "history has always proven that

commodity prices will rebound," says Leemaster. "We keep hiring at low prices so we can plan for the long-run."

Another perspective on Devon came from Greg Kelleher, Senior Vice-President of Devon's Southern Division. He was a 1976 Mines graduate and felt that the "Education at Mines was outstanding." For the student looking to get hired by Devon, he suggest "[looking] towards other companies if they're interested in the oil and gas industry. Any exposure [helps]."

As a final note, Kelleher said, "I love working here at Devon... The quality of students that Mines is providing is really top-notch. They're playing a great role in supplying good students and they play a role in the future of our industry."

Tim's two cents

The plus/minus system

Tim Weilert
Content Manager

To put it bluntly, the +/- debate has gotten out of control. As a newspaper, this is a good thing, it gives us content and gives people a reason to pick up the latest copy. However, in a more general sense, the entire course of events that have unfolded over the last few months have revealed something far more sinister: complaining.

From what I've been able to gather, the Faculty Senate (and other executive faculty boards here on campus), function more like a business and less like a democracy. They try to do what is best for all groups involved, but at the end of the day, it is their call regardless of student

input. The amount of "protest" and "dissent" seen on campus has been even greater than when conservative students protested the Obama visit. However, these actions have been nothing more than a front for old fashioned complaining.

The best way to illustrate what I mean is to go back to the idea of the school as a business. If you were working at a large corporation (say 5000 employees with 20 executives), and the executive board decided to cut employee pay, would you go around signing petitions and stirring up

others to protest the decision? Of course not! (You would obviously get fired or face some sort of punishment). The same common sense should apply here at Mines.

Dissent certainly has its place, but not in every circumstance. Perhaps one of the most counterproductive aspects of the Mines community is our tendency to complain. Complaining is contagious, we bicker and whine about everything from the food at the Slate to that difficult class to the guy/girl ratio and the extra negativity gets us nowhere. Perhaps if less time was spent complaining and more time spent studying, the opponents of the +/- system would not need to worry about their grades falling as a result of the new system.

Perhaps one of the most counterproductive aspects of the Mines community is our tendency to complain.

Cultural Diversities

Personal experience with the US police culture

Georges Ngonyani
Staff Writer

You may wonder why police issues fit under cultural issues. In my first article, I defined what culture is; all that you do everyday. In this article, I present my personal experience with the police in the US. I have two stories.

The first story is about the first day I arrived at Denver International Airport. I miscommunicated with my supervisor who had to pick me up (I will not go into the details on what happened). After waiting for her for an hour, I decided to approach an officer, with a fearful heart, to ask him how could I make a call to my supervisor. Instead of directing me on what to do, he told me to give him my supervisor's phone number. He called the number several times but it was unreachable. He was sorry for that. He kept trying to call for a couple of more times. After two hours from the time he helped me to call my supervisor, he came back telling me that he

was to give me a ride to Golden. I thanked him and God. On the way I asked him how much do I have to pay. He said "zero cent." This was something unusual to me. At Golden, he directly sent me to the CSM Police Department where I met Mrs. Carlos who helped me to find a place to spend the night in the students' dorms. That is how I came in Golden.

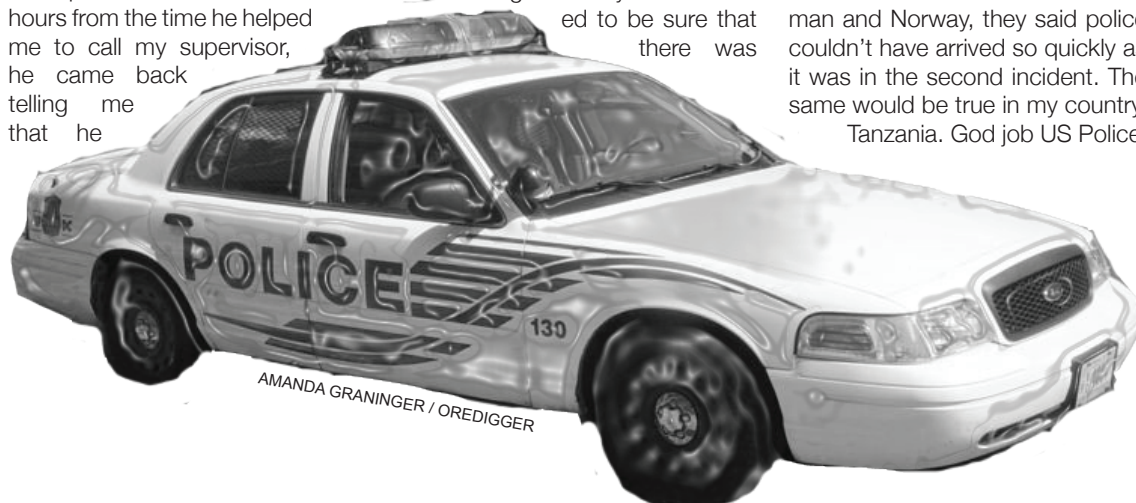
My second story happened about two weeks ago. I was with two of my friends, Christian (German) and Astrid (Norwegian). It was about 2 AM, on 19th Street.

There is a speedometer measuring how fast cars move. Christian was curious to know if they can also measure people's speed. We agreed to try. So we waited to be sure that there was

However, we are still in a dilemma as we want to know where did they come from and how was it possible for them to respond so quick like that.

ine reason. We thought they were going to arrest us but they politely and logically explained to us how dangerous it was to be on the road. They educated us about road safety. We then decided to go to our place. However, we are still in a dilemma as we want to know where did they come from and how was it possible for them to respond so quick like that.

With these two stories, I have learned that the Police in the US has the following cultural aspects: quick response, awake all the time, ready to serve every time, they reason before using force. I asked Christian and Astrid on whether that could be the case in German and Norway, they said police couldn't have arrived so quickly as it was in the second incident. The same would be true in my country, Tanzania. God job US Police!



AMANDA GRANINGER / OREDIGGER

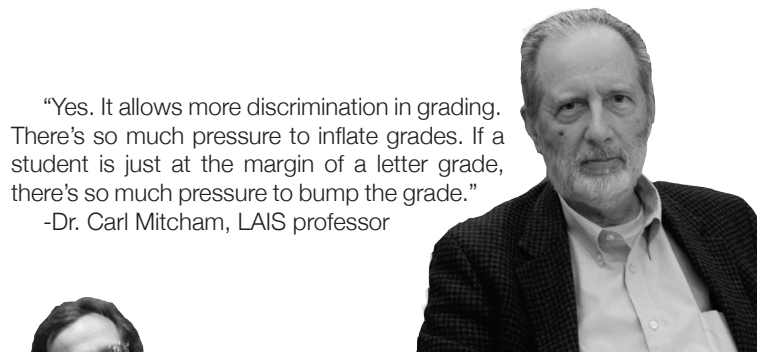


Minds at Mines

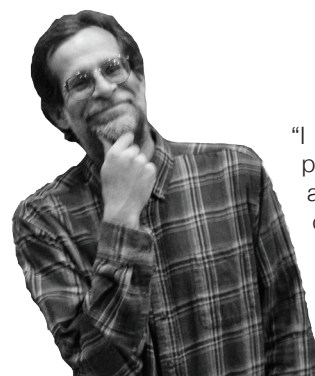
Faculty on plus/minus

Zachary Boerner
Copy Editor

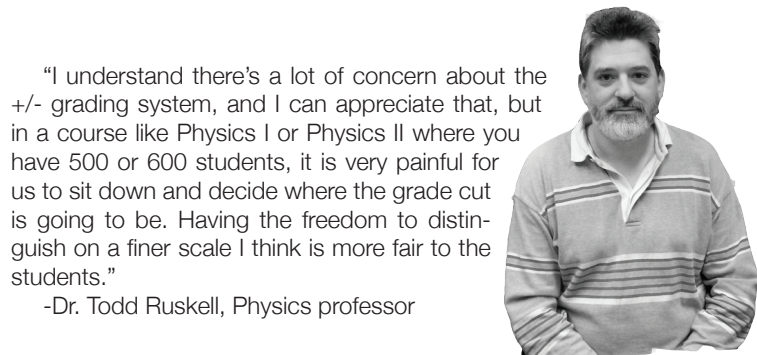
The whole campus is abuzz with the discussion of the plus/minus grading system which is set to be voted on this Tuesday, but what do the faculty actually think of such a system, and would they use it?



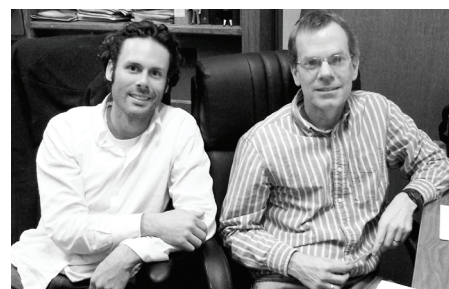
"Yes. It allows more discrimination in grading. There's so much pressure to inflate grades. If a student is just at the margin of a letter grade, there's so much pressure to bump the grade."
-Dr. Carl Mitcham, LAIS professor



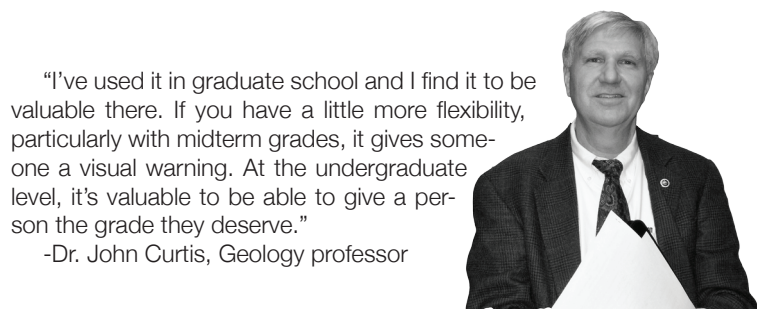
"I believe it should be an option, but I don't plan on using it. I don't think it really adds anything significantly to a course. I think it causes more trouble than its worth."
-Dr. Mark Seger, Chemistry professor



"I understand there's a lot of concern about the +/- grading system, and I can appreciate that, but in a course like Physics I or Physics II where you have 500 or 600 students, it is very painful for us to sit down and decide where the grade cut is going to be. Having the freedom to distinguish on a finer scale I think is more fair to the students."
-Dr. Todd Ruskell, Physics professor



"I would use it. If they implement it and write out the guidelines, I don't see why I wouldn't use it."
-Brian Lehman and Rod Switzer, MACS professors



"I've used it in graduate school and I find it to be valuable there. If you have a little more flexibility, particularly with midterm grades, it gives someone a visual warning. At the undergraduate level, it's valuable to be able to give a person the grade they deserve."
-Dr. John Curtis, Geology professor



"I can see pros and cons and understand why students are worried about it. In our mind, we're rewarding students... With a core course, I would talk with the other instructors and make sure we're all on the same page. For my upper division courses, I would take a very democratic approach and talk to my students at the beginning of the semester."
-Toni Lefton, LAIS professor

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Perseverance with chemistry

Rob Versaw
Staff Writer

This season has been an interesting one for the Lady Orediggers: "It has been a challenging journey. The season has been full of peaks and valleys, but we are exactly where we want to be right now," said Coach Krueger. It's hard to argue with that fact: the girls sit alone atop the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference's (RMAC) East Division with a 13-4 record, statistically the best in Mines' history. They are at the brink of doing what no other team in Mines history has ever done—hosting a home playoff game.

It did not start off that way though. Junior post guard Savannah Afoa explains, "At the beginning we were struggling. We were trying to find chemistry." However, they found their stride. "When we got transition down and decided to be a running team, we found what we were good at, attacking and rebounding." As some fans might have noticed, this is a change from what they have done in years past. Krueger explained, "This [running] was the best option with the kids we have." She

admits, though, that they are not a pure running team. Redshirt junior forward Brecca Gaffney elaborates, "We are a running team, but [Coach Krueger] broke it down.

We still have our jobs in set situations." Whatever they do, it certainly seems to be working. They turned around and enjoyed a midseason, seven-game conference winning streak.

"It fueled the fire, it brought us closer together as a team, we are just that much more pumped to achieve our goals."

Chemistry has played a major role in the girls' success. "It's like night and day from last year," explains Gaffney, "I've never been around a group of girls so close. I know it sounds kind of cliché, but we are like a big family. It's like having 12 sisters." Brigham concurs, "Being as close as we are and having that ultimate goal makes us tight like spandex."

Every game is critical for RMAC standings. However, the focus remains simple, according to Afoa, "We need to take care of business, win these two games and do decent at conference, but it's all one game at a time." Coach

Krueger echoes her sentiments, "We need to finish strong and put ourselves in a position to do well, and let the chips fall as they may after that." The team has their final home games Feb 27 and 28, both at 6 PM in Lockridge Arena. Brigham states, "We take pride in representing Mines, and look forward to seeing our awesome study body come out this weekend to watch some good basketball."

Scoreboard

Information courtesy of Mines Athletics

Wednesday, February 18

Mines defeated Colorado State University – Pueblo by the score of 21-15 in a Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (RMAC) wrestling dual at Volk Gymnasium with victories from Jesse Snider (149 lbs.), Travis Wokasch (157 lbs.), Jordan Larsen (165 lbs.), Ryan Swanson (184 lbs.), and Bryan Stansbury (HWT).

Friday, February 20

Emporia State University defeated Colorado School of Mines by the score of 6-1 in NCAA Division II baseball action at Darden Field in Golden. Emporia State's Ben Graham scattered five hits while allowing just one walk and striking out nine.

Mines track & field squads hosted the CSM Twilight Open at Steinhauer Fieldhouse in Golden, Colorado. Kiera Benson posted two NCAA provisional qualifying times at the meet, winning both the 60 m (7.71) and 200 m (25.67). CSM placed two in the top three in the 400 m as Melissa Stratton finished first (1:01.20) and Kristen Rinedollar placed third (1:02.23). Marie Patton posted a second-place finish in the mile run (5:24.78). The CSM men had the top two finishes in the 800 m. Peter Jenkins won the event (1:59.82) and Joe Dezman finished second (2:01.68). Jason Lehman (200 m, 22.96), Michael Calhoun (60 m hurdles, 8.66), and David Stuart (high jump, 2.00m) all posted second place finishes in their respective events. Nick Zehring placed third (14.91 m) in the shot put.

Saturday, February 21

Emporia State University swept Mines in an NCAA Division II baseball doubleheader at Darden Field in Golden. The Hornets prevailed 18-4 in game one before posting an 11-0 shutout victory in the nightcap.

Mines swept the University of Colorado – Colorado Springs in a Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (RMAC) basketball doubleheader at Lockridge Arena. The Mines women posted an 83-51 win and the Oredigger men secured a 93-65 victory.

Fool's Gold

“Plus/minus pandemonium!”



Construction of large bagron supercollider

James Cuzella
Bagel physicist

Here at Mines, the new Einstein Bros. bagel location in the CTLM seems to be drawing most of the excitement. However, today, the Einstein brothers announced that their new location is only the beginning.

When asked about the new project, the brothers Einstein, Melvyn and Elmo were very ecstatic. “Oy, We’re just so excited to tell you about our new supercollider! As our stepbrother Albert before us unlocked the mysteries of Relativity and nuclear fission, we hope now to uncover the Unified Bagel Field Theory!” said Melvyn. “It’s a well known fact that bagels are the perfect shape for studying electromagnetic fields!”

As the Hall of Justice is being prepared to be demolished, construction of the new underground Large Bagron Supercollider is underway. Building underground while demolishing aboveground has made this project much easier to meet its scheduled completion

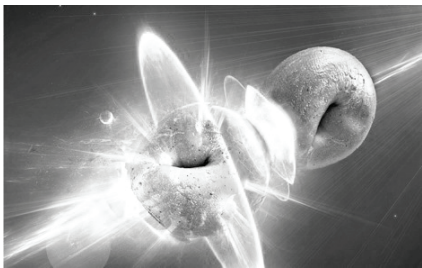
date for next fall.

While most see the supercollider as the gateway to many potential scientific discoveries, some are protesting the new device. A group calling itself “People for the Ethical Treatment of Bagrons” (PETB) was spotted protesting the new construction project. “You’ve got these subatomic bagels accelerated at great speeds for the sole purpose of being destroyed. No one thinks of the ethical implications of this,” said Tina Bagaumiller who founded the group. “There’s a limited supply of bagrons in the universe. Do we just want to go around destroying them? What if we run out? What if the bagrons can feel pain? Will we look back at this hundreds of years from now and regret it? Kinda like we do with the killing of bacteria with antibiotics now.”

Other protest groups are

concerned with the implications of creating a miniature black hole by smashing so many bagrons together, but this was dismissed as ridiculous by Aramark president of Business Dining, Gary Crompton. “This whole notion that a black hole could develop from a subatomic bagel is pure fantasy. Everyone knows that bagels already have holes!”

When asked about his company’s relationship to the Einstein Noah Electromagnetic Restaurant Group (ENER-G), our correspondent promptly became lodged in a trapdoor. Luckily, he had been on a steady diet of nothing but cheeseburger combo meals from the I-club. After dislodgement, an angered Crompton then had security escort our man off the premises as he turned in his armchair, and stroked his cat, Fluffles.



COURTESY JAMES CUZELLA

Artist’s rendering of a bagel collision

Elephant virus prevention Mines students to abstain from all outside contact

Keegan Whisler
Hypochondriac

After a large backlash of confused students, School of Mines professors and lecturers came together in a meeting late last week. A meeting held in desperation, a meeting meant to end all the confusion and constant back tracking that must be done to explain each lecture to the students.

Most students can attest that they have attended many a lecture in which they left with more questions than minutes spent in the lecture. This rash of confusion is quickly becoming an epidemic!

The professors and lecturers decided to arrange a mandatory lecture for all students in an attempt to curb this growing problem. This is no ordinary lecture, it is rumored to feature such subjects as “how to stay awake,” “vocabulary to know,” “jargon 101” through “jargon 401.”

This seems to be a real problem for professors such as Ima Li-Air who explains, “I am just tired of reiterating lectures three and four times before my students understand. When I say

‘heteroscedasticity,’ I think my students should know it deals with wind speed variability over time, not thinking of their (dream) girlfriends!” Seeing as Professor Li-Air had to restate the previous five times and spell “heteroscedasticity” three times, her point was well made.

It appears that this epidemic may soon turn pandemic. It is theorized by the Biology department that Mines students have already contracted the slow moving virus from their counterparts from other colleges and universities, most likely the highly sports oriented CU-Boulder oriented CU-Boulder where students have been affected for years.

Studies are being done on snacking during lectures and actually reading material before attending the lecture in an order to protect the valuable minds of the student body. There was a lecture last week on raising student tuition to pay for this research. The word was never spread and students did not realize the rise in tuition seeing as the individuals who attended where already affected by the newly named El-

ephant virus.

The Elephant virus, an aptly chosen name given its ironic play on student memory (or lack thereof) and following the naming convention of the common cold or Rhino virus of which many students are also suffering. Researchers highlight the need for Mines students to protect themselves by avoiding contact with individuals from the so called “ground zero schools” and learning the vernacular of the lecture prior to attending.

Also, as a social experiment, any students unable to comprehend the previous sentence maybe showing early signs of the Elephant virus and are asked to quarantine themselves amongst their textbooks whom Chief Researcher A. Lona Gain says, “shouldn’t be a problem for Mines students.” As a sufferer of this dreadful virus, attending class becomes a very confusing and disorienting experience often accompanied by panicked nights of cramming before tests and exams.

Students at “ground zero schools” have been quoted anonymously, to avoid retaliation through calculus jokes, as describing the symptoms “like you were spendin(g) a week at the School of Minds (Mines).” Stay alert for postings and lectures on how to combat the Elephant virus, lectures are only available to non infected students.



CSM’s green goals for 2009

Janeen Neri
Environmental Consultant

10. Disable Slate Café’s air conditioning when the outside temperature is below 32K.
9. Return the job of “quantitative analysis” to computer-controlled systems, which can do it much more precisely, and therefore with much less waste, than humans.
8. Reallocate the money currently paying for RTD bus passes to new residence halls. Buses may reduce the commuting student’s impact on the environment, but living on campus brings the figure closer to zero.
7. Replace all windows with mounts for solar panels. Studies show that the amount of sunlight a student experiences is inversely proportional to his GPA, so the window space is obviously much better spent on solar energy.
6. Provide trash chutes in each room rather than wastebaskets. Not only will this cut CSM’s plastic bag usage considerably, but it will also serve as a convenient method for disposing of “bad nuts.”
5. Set the residence hall showers so they actually turn off when a toilet is flushed, instead of wasting water and heat on boiling water that **no one actually washes under**.
4. For similar reasons, phase out auto-flush toilets from all restrooms on campus. Everyone suspected that they were malevolent robots bent on world domination, anyway.
3. Eliminate all foods with faux-French names from the Slate menu. This step is estimated to cut methane emissions by at least 50%.
2. Make all PowerPoint presentations self-powered by the beginning of fall semester. A graduate student has shown that the up-and-down head oscillation of only 100 students – much less than are oscillating in a typical PowerPoint lecture – can together produce enough power to make whatever alternative energy lecture they are enduring irrelevant.
1. Replace tree-killing scantrons with oral exams. If the class is too large for this to be feasible, tests are to be done away with entirely.

Laziness finds a host

David Underwood
Imaginary stockbroker

The Government’s latest idea of reviving a real economy with imaginary money has raised a lot of eyebrows in Washington.

“My parents always told me that my imagination was a powerful thing. You know what? They were right!” responded Senator Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico when asked how the new Stimulus Bill was going to work. “This worked so well, I think I’m going to try it with my kids! I finally don’t have to worry about giving my 16 year old a car! Well, at least a real one.”

The theme has caught like wildfire in Washington, with words of imaginary government services appearing in every state.

“We are going to save hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars with our new Imaginary School System! This is genius! I’m so excited to finally see an exemplary fiscally responsible move from Washington,” reported New York governor David Paterson.

School attendance has dropped drastically since the news of the bill. One child, when asked why he was no longer attending school simply replied, “but I am in school!” Upon further questioning the child simply put his fingers in his ears and yelled, “la la la la!”

Yesterday morning at 9 AM in

the nation’s capital, there was an especially strange outbreak of what experts are calling “imaginary dementia.” The cities’ business and governmental services had ground to a complete halt; no one had come to work.

Marketplaces across the city began to be emptied of their products with only Monopoly money and napkins with \$1 scribbled on them being left behind. One patron (shoplifter) stated that he had “paid for everything in full! I’ve never been able to afford whatever I wanted. Its really quite nice.” With the horde of patrons with unlimited imaginary money threatening to spread to surrounding areas, the military was soon called to restore order and sanity.

The last reports from the military operation contained shouts and cheers of “winning the lottery” and odd responses of “I don’t know what you’re talking about. My name is Bill Gates, get it right.” The likelihood of “imaginary dementia” spreading across the entire continent seemed almost inevitable; indeed the day seemed almost lost.

It wasn’t until the Canadian Royal Mounted Police arrived that people finally returned to reality. The day ended, strangely enough, with a net gain of 2 trillion dollars to the money supply, 96 deaths due to people imagining that they could fly, and the Canadians annexing the country.

Here's something to bounce around before the break.



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